CNN - STS-95 LANDING (11:56 A.M E.T - 12:29 P.M E.T) (11-7-1998)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWQtjCwPSk (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWQtjCwPSk)

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From Saturday, November 7th, 1998 CNN Live coverage of the countdown and landing of STS-95 and the return of John Glenn to earth. In 1962, Glenn was the first American to orbit the earth. In 1998, After a career in the United States Senate he was heading back into space.

- Landed at 12:04 P.M E.T
- Coverage runs from 11:56 A.M E.T - 12:29 P.M E.T

  The STS-95 Crew:
  Commander :Curtis L. Brown

  Pilot :Steven W. Lindsey

  Mission Specialist 1 :Pedro Duque, ESA

  Mission Specialist 2 :Scott E. Parazynski

  Payload Commander :Stephen K. Robinson

  Payload Specialist 1 :Chiaki Mukai, NASDA

  Payload Specialist 2 :John H. Glenn

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[Music] the landing of shuttle discovery bringing six astronaut heroes in one american legend back to earth this is cnn live coverage from kennedy space center in florida here now cnn's miles o'brien and walter cronkite [Music] hello everybody and welcome we are about seven minutes away from the conclusion of john glenn's second flight in space i'm here with walter cronkite and as you watch uh let's take a look at the picture there's our first pictures of the shuttle as we turn to nasa television way off in the distance over central florida traveling at uh great speed and uh altitude this point but dropping very quickly walter it uh take you take us back 36 years ago the re-entry was awfully different then wasn't it this is vastly different watching an aircraft come in for a landing as opposed to watching a capsule plummet into the ocean under under a parachute hopefully under a parachute now every astronaut said the greatest moment of the flight was when they saw that chute open above them after they'd come through the the the blackout period at that time they landed by parachute in the ocean out there in the ocean recovery team on aircraft carrier destroyers everybody had their glasses focused on the sky hoping for the first glimpse of the parachute when they got it there was a chair of course that went up then the rush to get over to the capsule we lost one in the early stages with grissom his capsule sank under him and there's always the fear that there might that might happen of course for all kinds of precautions taken against that but as long as they landed closely enough to the landing to the recovery ships why all was well and that happened in every case all those landings right up through apollo from the return from the moon were the same type of very primitive landing compared to this aircraft type landing that the shuttle provides and just and also in the case of john glenn there was a lot of concern about that retro pack that he

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that retro pack that he had still attached and whether his heat shield was properly attached that was uh there were some tense moments weren't there well but that came before the landing sequence that came in the in the uh in the ionization as they entered the atmosphere the determination was whether that heat shield was still on there was being burned off as he went into the intense heat of reentry and that was a blackout period at that time there was no communication the ionization built up around the spacecraft so there was no communication at all and we went through a couple of minutes there of blackout true blackout in which no one here at space center knew whether he'd successfully uh re-entered the the earth's atmosphere or not uh by the time that communication was reestablished it was known that indeed each field had held as planned that the retro package had burned off his plan no problems all right and commander kurt brown now guiding the space shuttle discovery toward the 15 000 foot landing strip here at the kennedy space center our charles we is right beside that run runway charles miles and walter uh as you say about four minutes and 54 seconds now a touchdown everything in readiness here the recovery crews on standby you can see the runway all clear now people waiting for that uh sonic boom the double sonic boom that signals the approach of the shuttle discovery john glenn and crew arriving here the emergency crews are ready to rush out onto the runway once the shuttle touches down at about the 2600 foot level along runway 3-3 here the 15 000 foot runway and makes its roll out and comes to a stop here nasa told the crew just a short time ago they expect a touchdown at about the 2600 foot level all along the runway at about 205 knots as they make their approach again they will not be using that drag chute here that had been some source of concern albeit minor concern by officials everything in readiness for the shuttle everything looks good miles and walter 200 205 knots about 225 miles an hour and i think as you just said that uh we heard the loud report of a sonic boom bob cabana is sitting beside me

00:04:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWQtjCwPSk&t=241s)

bob cabana is sitting beside me commander of the next space shuttle mission sds stadium those were the sonic booms and uh bob take us aboard for a moment what's going on in the cockpit right now well right now kurt and steve are totally focused on their at hand following the guidance as he rolls onto the heading alignment cone here intercepting it at about 36 000 feet he'll be flying a 270 degree turn around to uh final final approach is a 20 degree dive at about 295 knots so he's making sure he's monitoring his energy and that everything's on for uh set himself up for a good landing and they've got the critical point right now of checking whether that parachute is going to deploy or not the the 11-foot [Music] door to the parachute canister fell off on launch uh whether that thing deploys or not is a concern i gather commander that if it deployed one the reducing speed for the final that would be the most difficult situation that's right walter uh if it were to inadvertently deploy when they're down close to the ground would be the most critical time but both steve and kurt have been briefed ahead of time they're prepared and they'd be able to jettison it in a moment's notice if that were the case you consider those instructions to them that the pilot's going to hit three buttons simultaneously i don't know how he does that to blow some explosive bolts and throw the thing out that kurt brown will let go for a moment let it fly itself for a second or two and then grab hold again does that sound reasonable to you well he's going to get him off real quick and i'm sure kurt is not going to totally let go during that timeframe now as i understand it bob the chase planes which are giving me us these pictures are also uh carefully looking at where that door would have been to see if they can ascertain anything about it i i suppose that'd be a difficult task to really learn much about what the shoot is doing right now and that that door is right back at the tail so if it came out and we saw it on the film on the picture here it'd be right in the after part of the aircraft of course we're about a minute 30 landing bob what

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we're about a minute 30 landing bob what do you think about this shoot thing not a big deal as far as you're concerned i don't think it's a big deal miles uh i think they're going to do a nominal landing and everything's going to work just fine and they're well prepared for any eventuality and i suppose it's worth pointing out to our viewers the drag shoot is an add-on sort of mid-way through the shuttle program some 48 missions landed without them it was an idea to save brakes and tires and so forth is not a mission critical kind of thing is it you bet and since then we've even improved the brakes on the orbiter so it stops much better even without a shoot tell us about these crosswinds the cross wing constraints are very very strict here at nasa 15 knots being the limitations i suppose the orbiter could probably and certainly pilots such as yourself can handle more uh there you always want to leave a little room for margin miles and you don't want to push up right to the edge so we've expanded our envelope and we've made it so that we can handle uh whatever we have all right let's listen in as the shuttle comes down to the shuttle landing facility here at the kennedy space center steve lindsey is now on the landing gear he's waiting to just push that button to lower them at 300 feet gear is down and locked [Music] away from this angle that it looks like your touchdown 30 miles an hour all right bob cabana said it that's the uh more than layperson's view of it a nice landing what are you looking for there oh you're looking for a nice smooth touchdown uh steady control hitting your target point on the runway being on air speed and uh keeping it tracking straight down the runway and kirk did a fine job as i would have expected how about this a perfect flight from absolute launch to set down not not a scarcely a glitch the

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set down not not a scarcely a glitch the parachute is the only one that could be considered a glitch and as as you said commander it wasn't critical well walter we've come a a long way since uh senator glenn's first flight and uh this is quite a spaceship that we're flying now it sure is tell us what happens next bob they don't just hop right out uh as you do when a commercial airliner gets up to the jet way there's a lot that needs to be done right now right you bet first off have you been on a commercial shuttle flight lately you know you don't hop right out of those either you might as well have a medical experiment well first thing you're going to do miles is start making sure that the orbiter itself is safe sniffing around for any hypergolic any fuel anything that might be leaking and uh on board they're safing the systems so there's a fair number of switches to be thrown even as it sits there on the right even after landing and when you say these hypergolic uh gases we're talking about the gases which control the thrusters in orbit right the thrusters for the ohms engines the orbital maneuvering system engines the reaction control system jets that control us give us a sense of the emotions inside right now there's some high fives being exchanged right now i'll tell you my first orbiter landing i was just so proud i had at the end of it i had tears coming down my eyes i was so proud of the crew and what a fine job they'd done and uh so happy to be on the earth after a safe successful mission next to the birth of my children and getting married it was the high point of my life it was outstanding they didn't stow away a little champagne right now unfortunately we haven't got that far yet a space travel not like a balloon flight right yeah uh i i gather that there are 20 or 30 vehicles involved in this uh in this post landing procedure 1200 people are so involved with an army and they they only approach within about 1200 feet of the vehicle from the rear checking these gases before they move closer into the and attach the umbilicals piping some clean air in there yes sir they'll be doing some sniffing with the

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they'll be doing some sniffing with the equipment to make sure it's a safe environment before people actually go in there maybe an hour before the crew comes out is that correct uh the crew will come out uh sooner than that uh before we actually see them we'll be a while they'll be getting on the crew transport vehicle and they have a number of uh medical tests and uh programs that they have to go through before they're released so it's gonna be a while before we actually see the crew tell us a little bit about the training uh bob because um you know even the most veteran of shuttle pilots or commanders get six landings maximum real real ones you've had three opportunities um i'm curious if the simulators that you work with do do the job properly the the simulators are excellent uh in houston the shuttle mission simulator we simulate everything from launch dyno rops to landing many times over but the the real key for landing the space shuttle is the shuttle training aircraft and it's uh it's a real airplane flying in a real environment and it flies just like the space shuttle the first time i landed columbia i felt like i'd done it a thousand times before and i had in the shuttle training aircraft no let's go down to charles z we who is right a lot closer to the shuttle than we are we only got a passing glimpse our best view was unfortunately on television charles how was it from your vantage point boy i tell you miles walter uh i've seen a number of shuttle launches and it's always impressive to see the boosters light up and the thing jump off the off the pad you feel it beating on your chest as it's going up but looking down at the end of the runway as the shuttle was landing and you just see it drop out of the sky all of a sudden like it's on some giant roller coaster unpowered roller coaster that's really impressive and uh right now uh you know it's just something that you can't forget you can't forget the launches and you certainly don't forget the landings although they're not as fiery and spectacular they're every bit as memorable right now here at the landing site the waterford high school band from columbus ohio has struck up they happened to be at disney world over in orlando asked if they could come over here and welcome senator glenn home it's not his hometown high school but they're from his home state

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they're from his home state and he served as u.s senator right now out of the runway on runway 3-3 the recovery vehicles are moving into place the sniffer trucks discovery in this crew took us around the round and that view is still tremendous and seriously to those whose prayers along with my own followed us around the world our heartfelt thanks and appreciation and all the nasa team from top to bottom and fought at the top farm to top they continue to do the superb research job that benefits every home in this nation and often without notice or proper recognition our thanks and my personal thanks for a job well done give each other a pat on the back you deserve it halo specialist number two john glenn 77 years old clearly euphoric uh bob cabana obviously pleased with uh the performance and we're talking about the emotions right now it's got to be at once exhausting and yet as you say very uplifting oh it's truly exhilarating miles uh it's just you can't imagine how fulfilling it is to have accomplished what they've accomplished the question now medically is going to be how john reacts to return to gravity after nine days up there that his age is part of the experiment as a matter of fact uh how an an elderly individual responds there's some thought that we can talk about after the gravity almost gravity-less situation in space to normal gravity on earth he he may be a little uh uncomfortable and disoriented even for a period of days it's uh walter uh i'll never forget my first space flight and you learn you adapt quicker to 1g coming home and you adapt quicker to zero g every time you fly but my first spaceflight this is no small task for for anyone let alone a 77 year old when i went to get out of my seat i felt like i was my legs were lead weights i could hardly move them you know and i had to get up and do a few deep knee bends and get going again before i actually felt like i had legs under me so you really feel heavy when you come home

[00:14:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWQtjCwPSk&t=840s)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWQtjCwPSk&t=840s)

you really feel heavy when you come home after being in space for that amount of time right there's always a bit of a struggle i guess is the term between the uh the crew people and the scientists who probably if they had their way would like to have everybody carted off in a gurney so they could be analyzed properly nevertheless if you're a commander of your pilot if you remember the crew you'd like to go out and take a walk around oh definitely you want to get out and see your spaceship you want to walk around and uh and see how it looks and uh just you want to keep that that feeling going for a little bit longer in the early days you wanted to look around to see how many of the tiles came off of the the tiles that were there to protect against that extreme 3000 degrees of heat and coming back into the atmosphere for the in the early days that was a serious concern we weren't at all sure that that tile system was going to work you bet but uh we've got a good handle on that now and it's become an extremely reliable system for protecting us from that reentry heat as i understand wasn't there one tile up by one of the oms thrusters it was a little bit uh knocked loose but not a series little piece of insulation between an area that had come loose but you can handle small degradations in it where you worry is if you hit a large area where there wasn't some sort of protection now so right now they continue the switch throwing and uh give us a sense we saw a couple of moments ago some of those vehicles of uh those uh clearly doing what you just talked about which is making sure that the gases are not an issue and so forth is it uh are they removing the gases from the immediate atmosphere around the shuttle is that accurate to describe it no the wind is going to move everything away what they're making sure of is that it it's safe to approach close to it and once they get a thumbs up then the convoy commander will move his people in and they'll give clearance for the crew vehicle to move up to the side hatch right now they're uh getting everything safe they're safing all the reaction-controlled jets turning everything off so that if there were a lake it would be isolated they're safing the side hatch so that the pyros that would blow the side hatch

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the pyros that would blow the side hatch if you had to get out in an emergency have no chance of going off when they pull the crew transfer vehicle up there everybody's getting out of their seats they're trying to get their earth legs back move a little bit and start readapting to 1g we taxpayers can be very pleased that the winds did not rise too greatly today because if the orbiter had to go to edwards air force base it would have cost a million dollars to get it back here so we saved a million dollars today in gloves bob cabana let me tell you this uh we are expecting to see that spectacular picture of everybody you know walking beneath the shuttle i just want to go back to this point one more time because i don't want to belabor it but nevertheless uh uh senator glenn and several of the people were involved in medical studies they face a couple of weeks of uh medical analysis do you sort of dread that in the background absolutely i mean it's no fun being poked and prodded with needles and going in for blood draws every day but uh it's a small price to pay to be part of this program i think that it's incumbent upon all of us to participate and learn that's what planet space is all about it's exploring and learning let's take a look at those two gentlemen walking beneath the uh discovery right there as it has completed its give you a sense of the size of that beast and what they're they're obviously and they're shipping right they're out there with a sniffer smelling for uh toxic gases and making sure that it's safe now the orbit itself is about 120 feet long has a 78-foot wingspan and weighs about 200 000 pounds at landing about the size of a dc-9 i'm told it's roughly the thing i don't know if it handles quite like a dc-9 it actually handles a little better than a dc-9 and goes quite a bit faster and you might say that a little higher a little higher too and that that angle of attack when it approaches the runway uh we we've talked about that but you have

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we we've talked about that but you have to let's try to relate that for people and it when it comes down at a 20 degree pitch the average airliner is coming in at no more than three degrees so that gives you an idea i mean when the first time you did it did you feel like you were coming uncomfortably close to the ground quickly you uh you feel like you're dropping out of the sky like a brick now i haven't been an old a6 pilot i did a lot of dive bombing runs so i'm kind of used to diving at the ground like that but i'll tell you at night yeah the first time you do it at night and you're practicing for a night landing and that ground's coming up awful fast there's a real tendency to start pulling out early i bet i bet well the crew ground crews continue their work uh checking for the outgassing as they call it and uh very shortly we should be seeing that hatch open and we should see the crew of the of the discovery as they uh disembark from what was a 3.6 million mile journey for john glenn and the remainder of the discovery 7. while we wait for that to happen let's take a look at some of the sights and sounds of the past nine days and we've got payload specialist number two john glenn this was his second flight into space today glenn's first historical flight aboard the friendship seven mercury capsule in 1962 was the first time an american orbited the earth [Applause] five four three two one booster ignition and liftoff of discovery with a crew of six astronaut heroes and one american legend this discovery roll program roger roll discovery [Applause] [Music] president watching with binoculars the first lady beside him

00:20:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWQtjCwPSk&t=1202s)

the next event will be burnout and separation of discovery's twin solid rocket boosters [Music] discover houston to engine banjo we had a wonderful uh ride up yesterday and uh i was uh keyed into every every little noise and quiver that the uh that we made on the way up and it was quite different than a ride i got before of course back a long long time ago [Music] a bit ahead of schedule as the samples are processed they are removed from the furnace and replaced with a new cartridge of advanced alloys [Music] well water is going quite well the whole mission's actually been going very very well we've accomplished everything that we've had planned so far the experiments and the science are progressing uh very nicely we had a very successful deploy and retrieve of the spartan spacecraft and it has uh gathered a tremendous amount of science on our sun so everything so far has gone fantastic we have you loud and clear and before we get started today i'd like to take a moment to say hello to the holloman family we have a photo of john with us today on board discovery and we'd like to thank john for all the things he's done for our space program and

00:22:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lMWQtjCwPSk&t=1320s)

our space program and we we'd like to say he'll always be in our hearts from an altitude of 351 statute miles as discovery crosses over the southernmost tip of africa a nighttime view of the world with flashes of lightning clearly visible over africa uh you don't need a walker up here you don't need to worry about osteoporosis or canes or anything like that because you just float across the room there's no such thing as broken hips or anything like that and uh so if you know if you have trouble sleeping at night why it's no problem because you have another night coming up in not more than 45 minutes so maybe this is a place we could start a retirement home someday pilot steve lindsey has now armed the landing gear and he's waiting to uh just push that button to lower him at 300 feet here is down and locked main gear touchdown [Music] and nose gear touchdown discovery rolls out on runway 3-3 concluding a journey of 3.6 million miles and a moment in history [Music]

00:24:10 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lMWQtjCwPSk&t=1450s)

houston discovery well-stocked kfc welcome home discovery and a crew of seven heroes from a mission dedicated to improving life on earth beautiful landing kurt stand by for post landing deltas nine days 135 orbits 3.6 million miles compressed into about three minutes time um some amazing pictures bob cabana just bring us up to date uh what's happening right now how soon might we see the crew uh well if we're fortunate they'll be egressing the vehicle here in about uh 30 minutes uh 40 minutes from now uh we should hopefully see him all right and let's talk a moment before we get away about your mission which is coming up december 3rd not that far off and this uh not unrelated in the sense that this is giving nasa an awful lot of momentum as you prepare for commanding the first construction mission of the international space station how are things going on that front outstanding miles we just finished three days of tests and technical briefings here at the kennedy space center preparing for our december launch uh we're really looking forward to a new era in space exploration here an era of international cooperation we've got hardware being built all over the world coming together on orbit you know it's it's everybody's responsibility to participate in the exploration of space and i think doing it together the space station is going to be a stepping stone to the to the future it's to going beyond earth and spines uh to the moon back to the moon onto mars and and beyond and i think it's uh it's not any one nation's responsibility it's all our responsibilities and we're all going to benefit from it all right commander bob cavanagh getting ready for sts-88 due to launch december 3rd your boss was listening as you spoke daniel golden is with us down near the shuttle uh daniel golden you going to give bob cabana a raise for what he just said

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can you hear us mr golden i know i could hear you all right mr golden yeah bob cabana was just talking about how this is really uh a milestone moment for nasa as you look toward the space station perhaps ultimately mars you agree without a doubt without a doubt yes i agree with him what are your thoughts right now as you see that orbiter behind you and if you as you've witnessed that uh what appeared to be a flawless landing that this nasa team is comprised of the greatest people in the world i'm i'm so proud of them they do things flawlessly and when they have problems they deal with it that drag shoot had some questions about it they work simulations they work contingencies they brought the crew back safe and that's what the space program is about mr golden uh all throughout this mission john glenn and yourself have stressed the fact that this is all about science but clearly there was a public relations component about this nasa must be pleased at the amount of attention and perhaps i might suggest a little bit surprised at the amount of attention i am stunned by the amount of attention when i agreed to send senator glenn into space i didn't have any idea that this would be the outpouring from the nation but you know what inspiration for our children and our seniors is not bad inspiration for adults to feel good about themselves to feel good about america it's not bad and having children have a hero i'm not against sports i'm not against rock stars but having a real good clean national hero to look up to to talk to them about the importance of maths and science i stand guilty as charged it was a bit of a risky mission when you consider the stakes uh after all president kennedy 36 years ago made the decision that he was a national hero too valuable to risk on a space flight

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too valuable to risk on a space flight mission did you have a lot of sleepless nights throughout these last months once the decision was made i have such confidence in this team no no sleepless nights but you know what nasa is about taking risk and when we announced john going back into space we said he knew there's a finite possibility he won't come back and he knows that the rewards outweigh the risk at nasa we represent the best in america and we're willing to deal with that risk and we don't have to make a special person and isolate them we want to open the space frontier so everyone in america could benefit and we know that there's a risk but it's okay we're americans and we do it what are you gonna say to payload specialist number two when you see him i'm gonna get i don't know if annie's not there i'm gonna give him a hug maybe if annie's there i'll push her out of the way and try and hug him too i'm going to say you did what you said you'd do you stuck to your guns and you're a man of integrity i love you nasa administrator daniel golden joining us from very near the shuttle landing facility and the space shuttle he will soon be seeing john glenn thanks for being with us oh it's my honor and i honor miles it turned out to walter walter um nasa couldn't have hoped for a better stint than this nine days except for that drag shoot door which turned out to be a non problem they had a good run didn't they absolutely a perfect run and then and that's a great credit to everybody it also presents some problems the uh in the first place we're about to find out in the next few months whether we learned anything really in this flight that glenn hoped to establish regarding the relationship between the effect of weightlessness on the average individual and an elderly individual and how those lessons might apply on earth uh they're very important to

00:30:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWQtjCwPSk&t=1800s)

on earth uh they're very important to all of us if it turns out that anything was learned at all we won't know that for months until this all the data is in and all the examinations have been made and the thus this this perfect fight with glenn actually has presented nasa with a terrible problem it got an extraordinary amount of publicity out of this flight with glenn aboard it renewed public interest as golden was just saying a moment ago in space flight and in nasa's mission and our dedication to it but at the same time the very nature of the flight the perfect flight again establish what the public has accepted now for several years which is that we that the space flight is now the normal uh not something extraordinary in which we should be devoting our public attention it's going on out there and it's doing well uh the the space flight today as we saw this landing uh we're launching these craft we're landing them here we've had 92 now missions uh in in space with the shuttle 92 for heaven sakes most of them got went by with hardly any public attention this one got this extraordinary amount because of glenn's persistence and demanding to go to try to prove this elderly the earth theory of his and now however we return to the routine bob savannah's going to go up there and here and within a month uh what a terribly important mission putting those pieces beginning to put those pieces together of that international space station as he says the next great move to our exploration of space which we have to be dedicated to manned exploration of space as well as robotic exploration of space and deep space but still it is being done so well that it's very hard to excite public interest in a construction project even when it's 350 miles out there somewhere

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350 miles out there somewhere all right bob from cabana may differ with you on that but walter cronkite always a pleasure thank you very much with that we will close out and just let you know that the ground crew there at the shuttle landing facility has pronounced the area around the orbiter safe the crews should be getting ready to disembark very shortly we should be seeing them around 1 pm eastern time we'll of course bring that to you live when it happens there will be a news conference by the flight controller shortly thereafter that also on our live schedule for you today and then sometime this evening a crew news conference we expect to see commander kirk brown for sure and then other members of the crew i would be very surprised if we didn't see john glenn at that particular event once again live coverage of that so stay with cnn throughout the day as we continue our coverage of john glenn's return to space and just a reminder uh all our coverage uh throughout these past uh nine days has been dedicated to our uh friend and departed colleague john holliman who should have been sitting in this chair and unfortunately uh tragedy struck and he wasn't and uh our best to his family at this moment and uh wherever he is i'm sure he's enjoying the spectacular pictures a great man much beloved by everybody at cnn everybody who knew him in the space program and that for example was they carried a picture through space before children his child uh and uh and uh we're missing a message booster ignition and liftoff of discovery with a crew of six astronaut heroes and one american legend [Music] main gear touchdown [Music] and nose gear touchdown discovery rolls out on runway 3-3

[00:34:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWQtjCwPSk&t=2040s)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWQtjCwPSk&t=2040s)

out on runway 3-3 concluding a journey of 3.6 million miles and a moment in history

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END